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# CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO ANNUAL HOMELESS COUNT REPORT NOVEMBER 25, 2002

**WILLIE L. BROWN JR., MAYOR**

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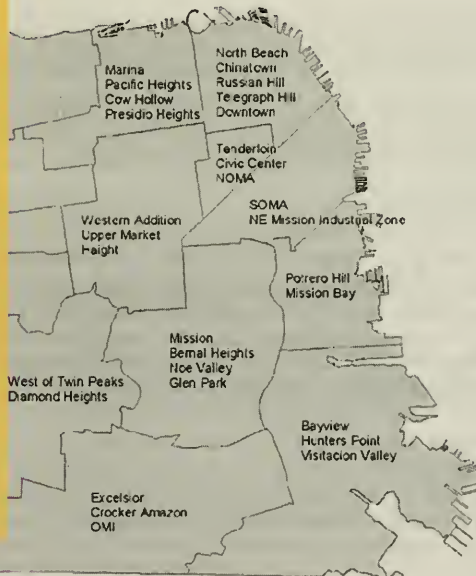


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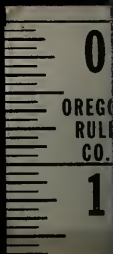
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**GEORGE J. SMITH III, DIRECTOR  
MAYOR'S OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS**

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# **CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO ANNUAL HOMELESS COUNT REPORT NOVEMBER 25, 2002**

**WILLIE L. BROWN JR., MAYOR**



**GEORGE J. SMITH III, DIRECTOR  
MAYOR'S OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS**



November 18, 2002

Dear Fellow San Franciscans,

On behalf of the Mayor of San Francisco and the many public servants of the City and County of San Francisco, I want to thank the nearly 300 individuals who donated their time and energy by contributing to the success of San Francisco's 2002 Homeless Count. This annual project has been an important tool for assessing the need for shelter and other homeless services throughout the city.

Fortunately, however, advancing technology has brought our days of manual counting of the city's homeless population to an end. We are replacing the Homeless Count with our recently launched Homeless Management Information System, called CHANGES (Coordinated Homeless Assessment of Needs and Guidance through Effective Services).

The CHANGES Directive: To use technology to enhance the effectiveness of outreach, case management, information and referral services in order to move homeless citizens to self-sufficiency. It will also help facilitate cross-agency collaborations allowing clients to connect with services at multiple agencies simultaneously. Furthermore, we can leverage technology to gather useful data in evaluating the efficacy of current programs and resources, and implementing new, creative and effective models of care.

The CHANGES system will completely integrate all city-funded programs providing care for the homeless in the City and County of San Francisco. The system provides on-line, real-time information regarding services clients need in a secured environment that maintains confidentiality. It will streamline services to clients, decreases duplicative client intake and assessments, evaluate utilization of resources, detail client outcomes, and provide improved accountability for the clients, service providers, and government. Also, for the first time, our homeless outreach workers will be equipped to tap directly into all Continuum of Care resources with wireless technology for on-the-spot assessments and referrals.

Our technological enhancements are driven, in part, by a mandate by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requiring county jurisdictions to create a database-driven system of tracking care for homeless clients by 2004. The goal is to accurately count, without duplication, how many homeless individuals and families are served in our system of continuum of care and adequately assess our avenues of service. As a result, these technical enhancements will allow for a monthly census of need in the City thus eliminating the need for our annual Homeless Count, which is susceptible, at various times, to both duplication and omission.

Again, the Mayor's Office thanks all of you for your commitment of making the Homeless Count a great success.

Sincerely,  
George J. Smith, III  
Director, Mayor's Office on Homelessness

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of annual counts is to gather substantive data to assist in both short-term and long-term planning for homeless services and policies in San Francisco. The count is designed to gather data about the number of individuals that fall into the category of homeless as defined by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Definition: “HOMELESS” includes individuals or families who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and who have a primary nighttime residence in one or more of the following categories: Shelter, Street, Vehicle, Makeshift, Doubled-Up, and Transitional.

The Grand Total count for the 2002 count was 8,640. This represents an increase of 18% compared with last year’s point in time count.

The totals are tabulated from three primary categories:

- 1) People who live and sleep on the streets.
- 2) People who live in shelters, transitional housing, and resource/drop-in centers.
- 3) People who are residing in treatment facilities and/or hospitals.

To protect the integrity of the process we limited demographic information collection to gender (whenever possible) and assigned routes within single geographic supervisory districts.

San Francisco’s homeless street population, as always, was the most difficult to assess. We relied on the coordinated efforts of nearly 300 volunteers and staff persons to complete a point-in-time canvassing of the entire city. They identified 2,449 homeless men, 790 homeless women, 81 transgender people and 1,215 genders unknown\* in the 11 supervisory districts of San Francisco – for a total of 4,535, this represents an increase of 43% compared with last year point in time count.

\*Gender unknown: includes people sleeping in vehicles, in dimly lit areas and under sleeping gear.

Residing in the single adult shelters, transitional housing and resource centers were 1,465 men, 510 women, 77 youths and four transgender people staying for a total of 2,056. The total number for single adult men and women represents an increase of approximately 25% compared with last year’s point-in-time count.

Residing in the family shelters, women in crisis (domestic violence shelters) and on the Connecting Point waiting list, there were 130 men, 277 women, and 377 children, for a total of 784 on the night of the Homeless Count. This number represents a decrease of 4% homeless men, women and children compared with last year’s count.

Connecting Point’s waiting list: In many cases, these are families who are currently living with relatives or friends. When a shelter placement becomes available, most families will choose shelter over cramped room or shared apartment.

In our data extraction of the exact treatment programs, including San Francisco General Hospital, there were 709 men, 296 women and 23 transgender people recorded for a total of 1,028 on the night of the Homeless Count. This number represents an increase of 39% in the



number of treatment beds being utilized from last year. However, we included eight new treatment bed facilities to our data collection process that added another 237 beds. With the additional beds identified, our total of treatment beds increased to 1,265 representing an overall increase of 71%.

In the future, we plan to collect this information electronically from the City's new Homeless Management Information System called CHANGES. This system is currently being tested and is expected to be in full implementation by March of 2003.

Again the Mayor's Office on Homelessness would like to acknowledge the collaborative efforts of everyone who helped make the 2002 Homeless Count a huge success. As a city, we see that our efforts make a difference in the level of services people receive each year. Encouraging notes include our ability to add six new shelters, with 285 beds, and two new transitional housing programs, with an additional 80 beds, to the city's continuum of care system. In addition, but unseen in this report, was an additional resource/drop-in center located in the Mission District. This resource is currently not yet open 24 hours; therefore no overnight occupancy totals could be recorded.

# **METHODOLOGY**

## **Homeless people living on the street**

The City's homeless are counted using the geographic boundaries of the 11 supervisory districts. Downtown areas are condensed enough to be thoroughly covered by volunteers on foot. Outlying neighborhoods, where few homeless people have been identified in the past, are covered by car. Even in these neighborhoods, volunteers are expected to leave their vehicles and conduct the count by foot in areas where there is a likelihood of finding homeless individuals. Volunteers are provided a map of the district to be covered thoroughly in their assigned area.

## **Homeless people living in shelter**

Approximately one month prior to the homeless count, the Mayor's Office on Homelessness mailed an advisory to all of the city's shelter providers, transitional programs, city departments and other organizations to advise them of the count. Over 3,000 individuals, agencies and organizations were invited to participate. All city contracted homeless service programs are asked to tabulate the population of homeless individuals/families currently in their program on the night of the count. Each agency is responsible for collecting the data and reporting to the Mayor's Office on Homelessness.

All teams utilized radios or cellular phones to facilitate communication during the count, to protect the safety of the volunteers, and to call for emergency assistance if needed. The San Francisco Police Department was on alert during the night of the homeless count. Volunteers also used two Mobile Assistance Patrol (MAP) vans to facilitate transportation to and from the areas assigned to count.

## **Homeless people in county hospitals**

San Francisco Department of Public Health provides all data of homeless utilizing inpatient services at San Francisco General Hospital. The San Francisco Sheriff's Department provides data on *self-reported* homeless individuals in the jail system.

## **Homeless Count volunteers**

The Mayor's Office on Homelessness recruits volunteers from all communities throughout San Francisco. These include, neighborhoods, community-based organizations, city employees, religious organizations, small and large businesses, homeless people, and staff and clients from the various city programs for the homeless. The count began at 9 p.m. to ensure that businesses or other places of temporary refuge after hours were closed. All volunteers were provided with the following instructions for the purpose of completing their assigned tasks:

## **Identifying the homeless**

We understand that to define who is or is not homeless by observation may create some unfortunate assumptions and, inevitably, some inaccuracies. We do not mean to imply that all homeless people are alike or present themselves in a similar way. However, there is no way around the problem of definition for this count.

All volunteers are instructed to count all people with: shopping carts; carrying a significant number of bags, bundles or suitcases, etc; people sleeping, laying or sitting on the sidewalk, street, plazas, parking lots, parts of the highway system, disheveled or unkempt people should also be counted. Old or new cars with shades drawn or clothes draped around the windows could have people in them and should be counted, by

counting 1 person per car or vehicle. Most importantly, DO NOT KNOCK ON THE VEHICLE. If at any time during the count a volunteer cannot identify the homeless person's gender, he or she is instructed to check off in the "unsure" column on the form.

#### **How do we count?**

When a homeless person is identified, count forms record the following information: homeless status and gender. We also asked that locations of homeless persons be recorded if possible. Using cross streets or landmarks was helpful for this purpose. Volunteers were instructed to make any comments brief and legible and when finished, sign the bottom of each sheet so that if questions come up we can follow up for clarity. Staff reviewed the counting sheets before each team leaves for the night.

#### **Wrap-up**

At least one individual from each team was responsible for returning counting forms to 101 Grove Street after completing assigned routes. Volunteers requested additional time by contacting the base by cell phone.



## History and Purpose

The Homeless Count for the City and County of San Francisco developed as a response to the United States Census Bureau's decision not to release the results of the 2000 census of the homeless population. The absence of the census information for homeless individuals and families in San Francisco was one reason, but also there was a need to dispel misunderstandings and to facilitate responsible reporting. Without reputable homeless census-like statistics, the city and service agencies were vulnerable to misunderstandings about the nature of the homeless population and misinformation regarding statistics – particularly as various interests randomly quoted unverifiable data or misrepresented governmental estimates. For example, a local news channel had reported that “the estimated total of homeless on the streets of San Francisco was 14,000.” However, the report failed to inform the public of two critical pieces of information: first, the total was only an estimate of homeless derived by a formula defined by the federal government's Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); secondly, HUD's definition was much broader than just counting those who were on the street. It included people living in programs, hospitals, jail, shelters, etc. All the while we knew the total of homeless on the streets to be much lower than 14,000.

Using best practices from U.S. Census Training and the guide “Practical Methods For Counting Homeless People” (The Urban Institute, 1996), the first count of San Francisco's homeless population on the street began on April 27, 2000. This was followed by another count on October 25, 2000, again in October 25, 2001, and finally our last count this past October 29, 2002.

During each Homeless Count project, all 11 supervisory district neighborhoods were blanketed by volunteers assigned either a walking and/or car routes. We equipped all volunteers with tally sheets, clipboards, flashlights, phones, and detailed maps with highlighted routes. Like true professionals, they weathered differing climatic conditions but always faithfully completed their routes. This year, over 80 teams were dispatched throughout the City.

The purpose of the information is to help San Francisco coordinate, plan and organize services more effectively by providing data that helps us allocate resources and identify specific need; always remembering the primary goal of our services is to help homeless people re-establish a stable environment and provide them with the tools they need to return to living self-sufficient lives. For example, new homeless resource centers have been opened and a shelter in the Bayview-Hunters Point community has been established since the first Homeless Count – two of the first homeless-service projects not centered in the downtown area. In addition, the street numbers have played a prominent role in the expansion of the Winter Shelter Bed program.

Lastly, until the scope and nature of the problem of homelessness can be defined, government agencies and community-based organizations are not adequately prepared to address important service delivery issues. With more accurate statistical data and the inclusion of regional homeless data from surrounding counties, possibilities to develop additional capacity for safety net services throughout the Bay Area abound.

# THE HOMELESS STREET POPULATION

October 29, 2002

## POPULATION ON THE STREET BY SUPERVISORY DISTRICTS

Districts	Men	Women	Unsure	Trans	Total
District 1	102	20		5	127
District 2	43	8	44	1	96
District 3	236	70	123	15	444
District 4	127	57	147		331
District 5	353	118	95	3	569
District 6	534	131	363	43	1071
District 7	163	63	29	11	266
District 8	253	76	42	3	374
District 9	174	55	20		249
District 10	369	155	287		811
District 11	95	37	65		197
TOTALS	2449	790	1215	81	4535

## THE SERVICE SYSTEM

### SINGLE ADULT/FAMILY/YOUTH CRISIS STATISTICS

SINGLE ADULT SHELTERS	Male	Female	Child	Trans	Youth	
A Man's Place *	104					
A Woman's Place *		83				
Diamond Center **	8	2				
Hospitality House *	30					
Dolores Street *	83					
Ella Hill Hutch Center *	141	28				
Huckleberry House **	1					
Lark Inn **	25	14				
MSC-South *	335	45				
Next Door *	146	98				
Providence Shelter *	58	11	6			
Sanctuary *	139	83				
St. Boniface *	84					
<b>Single Adult Shelter Totals</b>	<b>1154</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1524</b>

FAMILY SHELTER SHELTERS	Male	Female	Child	Trans	Youth	
Asian Women's Shelter ***		7	6			
Raphael House ***						
Riley Center ***		37				
Rosalie House ***	10	10				
Compass Ctr. ***	12	22	23		8	
Hamilton I ***	16	21	35		7	
Hamilton II GG***	16	29	32		14	
LaCasa De Las Madres ***		15	17			
St. Joseph's Village ***	9	17	21		5	
<b>Family Shelter Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>389</b>
Connecting PT. W. List ***	67	119	181		28	
<b>Families &amp; Wait List Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>784</b>

(\*)      *Single Adult Shelter*

(\*\*)     *Youth Shelter*

(\*\*\*)   *Family Shelter*

## RESOURCE & DROP-IN CENTERS

RESOURCE CENTER NAME	Male	Female	Child	Trans	Youth
Bayview Hope ****	51	5			
McMillian ****	65	17		1	
Southbeach ****	164	26		2	
SUB-TOTALS	280	48	0	3	0

331

## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

TRANSITIONAL HOUSE	Male	Female	Child	Trans	Youth
Ave. to Independence**	8	5			
Brennan House ***		12	16		
Clara House ***	4	7	12		
Guerrero **	9	5		1	
Gum Moon Woman Residence **		8			
Hamilton III (Transitional) ***	7	15	23		7
Marian Residence *		29			
Mary Elizabeth Inn *		8			
Richmond Hills ***	3	9	13		
SUB- TOTAL	31	98	64	1	7

201

*"Additional volunteers equals better coverage that enables us to count more homeless on the street. "Deven Richardson, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office on Homelessness.*

# *TREATMENT BEDS & OTHER TRANSITIONAL BEDS*

	AGENCY/PROGRAM	MALE	FEMALE	TRANS- GENDER	
1	Asian American Res. Recovery Services	13	4	0	
2	Baker Places - 4th Ave. Medically Supported Detox	0	4	0	
3	Baker Places - Acceptance Place	11	0	1	
4	Baker Places - Fremont St. Medically Supported Detox	4	0	0	
5	Baker Places - 7th St. Residential Program	8	3	1	
6	Baker Places Transitional	42	19	1	
7	CJCJ	14	0	0	
8	CATS/Golden Gate For Seniors	11	1	0	
9	CATS/Redwood Center	41	0	0	
10	Conard Jackson St. Residential Program	13	5	0	NEW
11	Conard Washburn Hotel	14	7	1	
12	Conard Dolores Hotel	33	18	1	
13	Friendship House Residential	0	2	0	
14	Good Shepherd Grace Center	0	0	0	
15	HAFCI/All Residential Programs	36	25	1	
16	HAFCI/OSHUN Center (New)	0	12	2	
17	HAFCI/Smith House Women's Detox	0	6	0	
18	Henry Ohlhoff House (Women's Residential)	0	5	0	NEW
19	Henry Ohlhoff House (Men's Residential)	4	0	0	NEW
20	Jelani House Inc.	6	25	0	
21	Latino Commission Cases Quetzal	24	2	1	
22	Milestones Human Services (Residential)	64	12	0	
23	Progress Foundation ADU's/Transitional	51	43	1	
24	Salvation Army Harbor Lights (Residential Detox)	16	4	1	NEW
25	Salvation Army Men's Work Program	90	0	0	NEW
26	Salvation Army Women's Work Program	0	17	0	NEW
27	Salvation Army Harbor Lights Center (Residential)	45	21	0	NEW
28	SFGH/ER Treatment	5	1	0	
29	SFGH/Inpatient	47	14	0	
30	SFGH/Mental Health Rehab (MHRF)	18	16	0	NEW
31	SFGH/Psych Emergency Services (PES)	0	0	0	NEW
32	SVDP Ozanam/Howard St. Detox (Includes BASN)	14	6	0	
33	SVDP WITHE Reception Center	22	3	0	
34	SVDP Howard St. Medically Supported Detox	13	0	0	
35	St. Anthony's Foundation-Covenant House	20	0	0	
36	St. Anthony's Foundation-Seton Hall	38	0	0	
37	Twelve Step Programs (Residential)	0	0	0	
38	Walden House/Adult Residential (Both Big Houses)	163	81	12	
39	Walden House WHITS Residential	2	3	1	
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1265</b>



## Grand Totals

Men	Women	Children	Transgender	Youth	Unknown	Grand Total
4,926	1,936	385	109	69	1,215	8,640

On behalf of the Mayor of our great city, we would like to acknowledge and express our sincere thanks to the many San Franciscans that volunteered their personal time to make this year's fall count a success.

This event would not have been possible without the support of the many businesses in our San Francisco community. The following is a list of establishments that provided food, supplies and equipment.

Albertsons

All-Star Cafe

Ambrosia

Arrowhead Water

Cala/Bell Markets

Noah's Bagels

Pizza Hut

Quincy's Sandwiches

Rite-Aide

Safeway Stores, Inc.

Starbucks

Sprint PCS

Trader Joe's

Walgreens



